



State of Rhode Island and Providence
Plantations
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Shepard Building

Peter McWalters
Commissioner

Rhode Island Special Education Advisory Committee

The Rhode Island Special Education Advisory Committee is an active voice in advocating that all students receive superior educational services enabling each student to achieve optimum success throughout the school years and into the world of adulthood.

April 23, 2009
6:30pm – 8:30pm

New England Institute of Technology
Hall of Fame Room
2500 Post Road, Warwick, RI 02886

Meeting Minutes

Present: Melissa Angell, Jeffrey Aubin, Deborah Belanger, Wilfred Beaudoin, Ann Brockmann, Amy Canario, Marie Cummiskey, Steven DiBiasio, Joanne Eichinger, Deb Goessling, Craig Levis, Kelly Martin, Dorothy McDonough, Richard Moore, Pamela O'Brien, Ralph Orleck, Robin Pacheco, Mary Pendergast, Jane Slade, Paul Stroup Jr., Sharon Terzian, Louise Tillinghast

Absent: Denise Ahern, Deborah Ambeault*, Barbara Chadwick, Kim Chouinard, Sheila Collins*, Roberta Emery, Kat Grygiel, Ron Martin, Jane Morein, Kellie Piche-Tatro*, Karen Rebello, Walter Sage*, Sharon Schubert, Lisa Shea*

*sent advanced notice

RIDE: Ken Swanson

Guests: David Sienko

Call to Order, Welcome, Agenda Review, Announcements

Approval of the March 19, 2009 Meeting Minutes: There were no corrections, and the March minutes were approved.

Director's Report: Kenneth Swanson, Office for Diverse Learners

- **Standards for Approval of Pre-school and Kindergarten and Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) Eligibility Criteria** – public meetings will be held on 5/4 and 5/6/09 (see attached). RISEAC encouraging individuals to present individual testimonies and looking for comment for RISEAC testimony.
- **RIDE Leadership Institute – Dropout Prevention** – 5/4/09 at Convention Center.
- **Restraint Regulations** – the report prepared by the Physical Restraint subgroup has been given to Marv Abney who will attend our May 21st RISEAC meeting.
- **Synopsis of Due Process Hearings** – Ken informed us that OSEP is requiring RIDE to present a synopsis of our due process hearings to RISEAC. Ken indicated that Kevin Nerney is preparing this, and he requests the committee to invite Kevin to make this presentation.

- **Global Waiver Committee** – this committee has been established and no one from RIDE was included in this group. Dot McDonough suggested that RISEAC support the participation of a RIDE representative on this committee. The group motioned and approved. Ralph will draft and send a letter from the committee.
- **Deborah Gist – New Commissioner** – Ken stated that the new commissioner is on board and the transition from Commissioner McWalters to Deb Gist has been smooth. June 15th will be her formal entrance and Ken will consider getting her to our June RISEAC meeting.
- **Parent Survey** – The survey is out, and four regional meetings have been organized in order to announce last year's district performance for the first time. Special Education Directors and their LAC or parent leader are invited to attend together in order to learn about the survey and district performance, and begin to build awareness within their own school communities about the survey and how to use the results for improvement planning .
- **Stimulus Funds** –Local Education Agencies will receive additional IDEA allocations and, for those eligible, Title I allocations, for the upcoming year. They have until September 2011 to expend the funds. The application is in development and is expected to be released shortly following the annual web-based Consolidated Resource Plan (CRP) Application in May.

OLD BUSINESS:

- **R.I. Adult Education Committee** - Ralph indicated that about 4-5 years ago, the RISEAC group had worked on the issue of students who withdrew from school. He is now on a subcommittee on the Rhode Island Adult Education Committee with Johan Uvin, which, because of the stimulus money, may have the ability to address the issue of special needs students who withdraw from high school. Ralph developed a letter to Commissioner McWalters from RISEAC providing data regarding looking for ways for IDEA funds to follow to age 21. The group reviewed the draft, suggested some minor changes, and approved a motion to send the revised letter.
- **Membership** – The results of the membership drive are complete and currently we have 35 members with 24 parents and every category filled. Only one member's terms expires – Ralph's – but an amendment to the bylaws was made last year to allow him to continue his term as chairperson. It was agreed by the group that we do not need more members at this time.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Presentation: High School Regulations** – David Sienko from RIDE presented on the RI State Performance Plan's Progress on the Transition Indicators 1, 2, 13 and 14.

Public Comment – None

Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned.

4/23/09 Recording Secretary: Deb Belanger

RISEAC website: www.riseac.org

Next Meeting: May 21, 2009

Telephone (401)222-4600 **Fax** (401)222-6178 **TTY** 800-745-5555 **Voice** 800-745-6575
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